

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for compressing digital content from a source, using a compression scheme selected from a group of available compression schemes, storing the compressed content at a central location, and retrieving the compressed content at a remote location, comprising the steps of:

- a) at a remote location, prompting a user for and validating a user name and password;
  - b) at a remote location, reading the source and prompting a user for tracks to be compressed, the user then identifying selected tracks;
  - c) at a remote location, prompting a user for a compression scheme to be used to compress the selected tracks, the user then identifying a selected compression scheme from a group of possible compression schemes;
  - d) at a remote location, compressing the selected tracks using the selected compression scheme;
  - e) transmitting each selected track after compression through a communications link to a central location;
  - f) storing each selected track in a digital content database at a central location; and
  - g) at a remote location, retrieving tracks from the digital content database through a communications link to the central location.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of identifying the source and validating the source's identity against an authorization database at the central location.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of prompting the user for the quality of compression to be used with the selected compression scheme.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the digital content is music.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the digital content is video.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the source is a compact disc.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the source is a digital video disc.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the communications link is the Internet.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of streaming the digital content for replay to a remote location.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of storing the retrieved digital content at the remote location.
11. The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of managing the digital content database from the remote location.

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12. A method for compressing digital content from a source, using a compression scheme selected from a group of available compression schemes, storing the compressed content at a central location, and retrieving the compressed content at a remote location, comprising the steps of:

- a) at a remote location, prompting a user for and validating a user name and password;
- b) identifying the source and validating the source's identity against an authorization database at the central location;
- c) at a remote location, reading the source and prompting a user for tracks to be compressed, the user then identifying selected tracks;
- d) at a remote location, prompting a user for a compression scheme to be used to compress the selected tracks, the user then identifying a selected compression scheme from a group of possible compression schemes;
- e) at a remote location, compressing the selected tracks using the selected compression scheme;
- f) transmitting each selected track after compression through a communications link to a central location;
- g) storing each selected track in a digital content database at a central location; and
- h) at a remote location, retrieving tracks from the digital content database through a communications link to the central location.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of prompting the user for the quality of compression to be used with the selected compression scheme.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the digital content is music.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the digital content is video.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the source is a compact disc.
17. The method of claim 12, wherein the source is a digital video disc.
18. The method of claim 12, wherein the communications link is the Internet.
19. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of streaming the digital content for replay to a remote location.
20. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of storing the retrieved digital content at the remote location.
21. The method of claim 12, further comprising a step of managing the digital content database from the remote location.

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22. A method for compressing digital content from a source at a client, using a compression scheme selected from a group of available compression schemes, storing the compressed content at a central server, and retrieving the compressed content at a client, comprising the steps of:

at the client:

- a) prompting a user for and validating a user name and password;
- b) identifying the source and validating the source's identity against an authorization database at the server;
- c) reading the source and prompting a user for tracks to be compressed, the user then identifying selected tracks;
- d) prompting a user for a compression scheme to be used to compress the selected tracks, the user then identifying a selected compression scheme from a group of possible compression schemes;
- e) compressing the selected tracks using the selected compression scheme;
- f) transmitting each selected track after compression through a communications link to the server;

at the server:

- g) storing each selected track in a digital content database at the server; and

at the client:

- h) retrieving tracks from the digital content database through a communications link to the server.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of prompting the user for the quality of compression to be used with the selected compression scheme.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein the digital content is music.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein the digital content is video.
26. The method of claim 22, wherein the source is a compact disc.
27. The method of claim 22, wherein the source is a digital video disc.
28. The method of claim 22, wherein the communications link is the Internet.
29. The method of claim 22, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of streaming the digital content for replay to a client.
30. The method of claim 22, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of storing the retrieved digital content at the client.
31. The method of claim 22, further comprising a step of managing the digital content database from the client.

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